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Cond B1
a moving mechanism that moves said barrier drive ring and said rotational barrier so that a relative distance between said rotational barrier and said barrier drive ring along the optical axis is varied in accordance with rotation of said rotational barrel.

28. The camera according to claim 23, further comprising a moving mechanism that moves said barrier drive ring and said rotational barrier so that a relative distance between said rotational barrier and said barrier drive ring along the optical axis is varied in accordance with rotation of said rotational barrel.---

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 24-28 will have been added. In view of the herein-contained remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action, together with the allowance of all the claims pending in the present application.

In the above-noted Official Action, claims 1-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over NOMURA (U.S. Patent No. 5,136,315). Claims 1-23 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over OMIYA (U.S. Patent No. 6,264,380).

As a preliminary matter, Applicants have added claims 24-28 to depend from independent claims 1, 11, 14, 15 and 23. Applicants submit that entry of the new claims does not present new matter for consideration. In particular, the moving mechanism

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recited therein involves, for example, figure 1, elements 18b and 25b (e.g., guide grooves 18b formed on the rotational barrel 18, as well as cam-follower pin 25b formed on the linearly movable barrel 25). Accordingly, Applicants submit that entry of the newly added claims is proper. In view of the remarks contained herein, Applicants submit that claims 24-28 are allowable, and request an indication to that effect in due course.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 1-23 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over OMIYA. Applicants have submitted herewith certified translations of Japanese Patent Applications 2000-022747 and 2000-022748, each filed on January 31, 2000, upon which the present application relies for a claim of priority under 35 U.S.C. §1.119. Applicants submit that the priority date accorded to the present application is earlier than the U.S. filing date of OMIYA, e.g., earlier than February 14, 2000. Accordingly, in view of the submission of the above-noted certified translations of the priority documents, Applicants submit that the rejection of claims 1-23 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over OMIYA is inappropriate, and request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection in due course.

Independently of the impropriety of the rejection based upon the submission of the above-noted priority documents, Applicants submit that the claims of the present invention are patentable over OMIYA. In particular, OMIYA discloses a barrier drive ring 24, a rear lens frame 71 that is rotated, and a long coupling lever 24d of the barrier drive ring. OMIYA also discloses biasing springs that are provided for each barrier plate.

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The rear lens frame 71 is provided with engaging pins 73 that abut against the coupling lever 24d of the barrier drive ring 24. In OMIYA, upon rotation of the rear lens frame 71, the barrier drive ring 24 is rotated to open and close the barrier 22 via engaging pins 72 and the coupling lever 24d.

However, since the rear lens frame 71 rotates the barrier 22 via engaging pins 72 and the coupling lever 24d, OMIYA does not disclose or suggest that the rear lens frame and the barrier drive ring are engaged and disengaged by varying the relative distance therebetween. Moreover, since the rear lens frame 71 is utilized to open and close the barrier 22, the long coupling lever 24d is required, which is disadvantageous with respect to miniaturization and reliability. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claims of the present invention are patentable over OMIYA for reasons in addition to the priority dates of the priority documents submitted herewith.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 1-23 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over NOMURA. NOMURA discloses a barrier driving member 21 that includes a biasing force transmitting projection 57. A lens barrel 12 includes a spring receiving groove 41 with a supporting projection 60 provided on one end. Supporting projection 60 is engaged by one end of the spring 40, and the other end of the spring 40 is connected to the biasing force transmitting projection 57 of the barrier driving member.

As an initial matter, the Examiner asserts that the spring receiving groove 41

discloses or suggests the rotational-force transmission surface. Applicants submit that the Examiner is in error, as the spring receiving groove 41 is not disclosed to have any relationship with the opening and closing of the barrier blades, except to receive (i.e. provide a space for) spring 40 for biasing. Accordingly, Applicants assert that spring receiving groove 41 does not disclose or suggest the rotational-force transmission surface recited in the claims of the present invention. Therefore, in view of the above-noted remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1-23 over NOMURA is inappropriate.

Furthermore, Applicants assert that the Examiner is in error because spring receiving groove 41 of NOMURA does not “engage” biasing force transmission projection 57, as would be required to meet the features recited in claim 1 (e.g., “said rotational-force receiving surface and said rotational force transmission surface are engaged with each other”).

In addition, the barrier driving member 21 of NOMURA is biased by the spring 40 and the biasing force transmitting projection 57. Accordingly, the biasing force transmitting projection 57 transmits the biasing force. However, when a rotational force that operates against a biasing force is delivered (e.g., a compressive force that operates against an expansive spring in the example of NOMURA), Applicants submit that the apparatus that applies the compressive force could not be considered a “rotational force

receiving surface". In other words, Applicants submit that biasing force transmitting projection cannot properly be considered a "rotational-force receiving surface".

Accordingly, Applicants assert that the biasing force transmitting projection 57 merely operates in a manner similar to the protrusions 26b disclosed in the present application in figure 16, and does not disclose or suggest a rotational-force receiving surface, as shown by, for example, 26c in Figure 9 of the present application, and as recited in the claims. NOMURA only discloses the purpose of biasing force transmitting projection 57 as using spring 40 to bias the barrier driving member 21. Therefore, Applicants assert that biasing force transmitting projection 57 does not disclose or suggest the rotational force receiving surface recited in the claims of the present invention.

Accordingly, at least for the above-noted reasons, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections of claims 1-23.

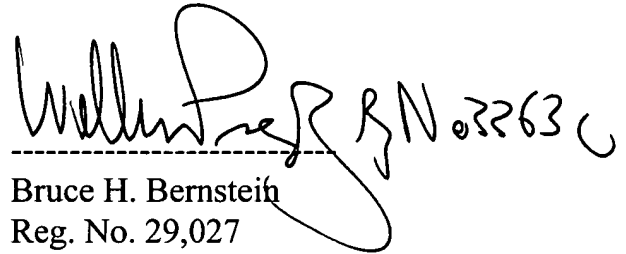
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so. Applicants have discussed the features recited in Applicants' claims and have shown how these features are not taught, disclosed nor rendered obvious by any of the references cited by the Examiner.

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Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding the present response or this application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
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 *Handwritten signature of Bruce H. Bernstein, with 'BN 03263 C' written next to it.*

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